Alternative Keyboard

A standard keyboard is the typical one used with today's computers. It is usually arranged in a QWERTY format, and is generally about 20 inches wide. An *alternative keyboard* is any other means used to input information into the computer. This ranges from a smaller space-saver keyboard to an on-screen keyboard where the mouse arrow acts like a finger tapping on a key.

Examples: Space saver keyboards, Wivik on-screen

Alternative Mice

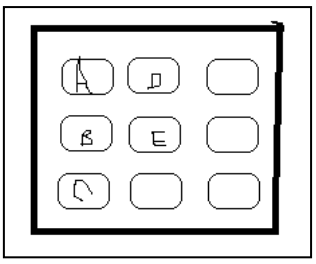
If a typical mouse is difficult for someone to use, it is vital to find an appropriate mouse alternative for them. An *alternative mouse* is a device or software that will mimic mouse actions - click, double click, mouse movement on the screen, etc..

Examples: trackball, touchpad, Mouse Keys

Filter Keys

Filter Keys are a set of features built into Window's Accessibility Features. They get their name from a user being able to filter out "extra" finger movements. Examples of movements are tremors, having difficulty lifting fingers off of keys or brushing against one key while aiming for the key next to it.

Keyguard



A *keyguard* is a board that is designed to fit over a keyboard. They can come in any size and for any layout, from the standard 101-QWERTY to a TASH mini. How they help is that a hole is cut out for each key. The hole serves as a guide for the person's fingers, and helps to isolate each key. This means fewer keys hit inadvertently. Having the plastic also

gives the person a support for their hands in-between keystrokes, resulting in less fatigue.

Scanning / Reading Programs

Scanning / Reading programs convert the printed page into text the computer can understand. The program's speech synthesis is then used to read the scanned text aloud. (They have not gotten to converting handwriting to computer text – yet!) While many scanners come with software that supposedly does this type of conversion, their accuracy level is poor and they do not provide the other features such as text-to-speech.

Examples: WYNN, Kurzweil, and TextHelp

Sticky Keys

Sticky Keys is a feature built into Window's Accessibility Features. It gets its name from a user being able to first press the Shift key, Control (Ctrl) key, or Alt key; let go; and then press a second key. The second key will act as if the first key is still being pressed. It only holds for one keystroke, which allows the user to easily continue typing. For example, with the Sticky Keys feature on, pressing Shift and then the H key a few times would give you "Hhhhhh".

Text-to-Speech Software

Text-to-speech is a word processing software program that takes what is typed in and can read it back to the user. This can be done as the user is typing or after any part of the document is completed. It can be used as a self-editing tool, as the user hears what they actually typed instead of "reading" what they think they typed.

Examples: Intellitalk II, Write Out Loud, ReadPlease

Voice Dictation or Speech-to-text Software

Voice Dictation is the process in which *Speech-to-text* software is used to input data into a word processing type program, spreadsheets, emails, etc.. What the user dictates using a microphone is converted to text by the computer. The typical use is for word processing, though it may also be used with other software programs, including AutoCAD and spread-sheets.

Examples: Dragon Naturally Speaking, Via Voice

Word Expansion

Word expansion is a method used to save time and keystrokes. A vocabulary list is developed by the user where an abbreviation is typed in and then automatically replaced by the full word, sentence or phrase. For example, "VATP" could automatically convert to "Vermont Assistive Technology Project" or a person's initials could convert into their name, address, phone number and email address.

Example: Key Rep

Word Prediction

Word prediction is a method used to save time and keystrokes. Based on the first letters of a word that are typed in, the program predicts the five most probable words the person is going to use. By glancing at the list, the person can tell the computer to use "choice 2" by pressing 2 rather than typing the next six letters that word may have required.

Examples: Co-Writer, Soothsayer, feature of TextHelp

The Vermont Assistive Technology Program			
Waterbury Office, Tryout Ctr	**Rutland Tryout Ctr**	**Randolph Tryout Ctr**	**Burlington Tryout Center**
103 S. Main St., Weeks Bldg. Waterbury, VT 05671-2305 802-241-2620 TTY: 802-241-1464 Fax: 802-241-2174 ATInfo@ahs.state.vt.us	190 ASA Bloomer Bldg. Rutland, VT 05701 802-786-5936 Fax: 802-786-5078 dan.gilman@ahs.state.vt.us	P.O. Box 85 Randolph, VT 05060 802-595-2831 Fax: 802-241-2174 eileen.haddon@ahs.state.vt.us	Center on Disability and Community Inclusion University of Vermont Trinity Campus 208 Colchester Ave., Mann Hall 3rd Flr Tel: 802-656-4031 Fax: 802-656-1357 cdciat@uvm.edu
www.dail.state.vt.us/atp	**800-750-6355 (VT toll-free)**		**ATinfo@ahs.state.vt.us**